

Appln. No. 10/716,260
Amendment
Reply to Office Action dated November 12, 2005

Docket No. 7202-48

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and these remarks are in response to the Office Action dated November 12, 2004. This amendment is filed with a Request for Retroactive Extension of Time and authorization to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0951 for the appropriate fees.

At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-13 were pending. In the Office Action, objections were raised to the title and specification. Claims 1-3, 5, 7-9 and 11-13 were objected to for informalities. Claims 1-6 and 8-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Claims 7 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The objections and rejections are discussed in more detail below.

I. Objections to the Title and Specification

The title of the invention was objected to for not being descriptive. The specification was objected to for failing to include appropriate section headings and for the recitation of the phrase "[t]he above-problem is solved by a method according to claim 1". The title is duly amended herein and the objected phrase is deleted and replaced with a summary of the invention that is based upon the text of the abstract. However, Applicant believes that sufficient section headings are already included in the specification, and has not added any additional headings herein. Withdrawal of the objections is thus respectfully requested.

II. Claim Objections

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-9 and 11-13 were objected to for informalities listed in the Office Action. The claims have been amended herein, and withdrawal of the objections are thus respectfully requested.

III. Rejections to the claims based upon Art

Claims 1-6 and 8-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 2000-178925 to Tesac Corp. ("Tesac Corp."). Claims 8-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,079,034 to Parkin. Claims 7

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and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tesac Corp. in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,781,458 to Gore.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that, during the clamping step the ropes (2, 3) press each other at their crossing over area, because of the displacement of the contacting strands, reducing the overall thickness of the two ropes pressed together to 1 to 4/3 the rope diameter (d) in such a way that the ropes (2, 3) are forced to lie substantially in the same plane at each knot (4) of the net (1). Support for this feature is found on paragraph 33 of the present published patent application. Claims 2 (knot claim) and 8 (function claim) have been amended to specify that the bridge element (9) comprises an arch (9d) which merges with the adjacent ends (7d, 8d) of the first and second U elements (7, 8) and it is integral with the latter to form a unique piece (11). The unique piece (11) has a given distance (h) measured between a tangent line (t9) at an intrados of an arch (9d) of the bridge element (9) and the plane defined by tangent lines (t7, t8) at the intrados of curved bases (7a, 8a) of first U element (7) and second U element (8). The given distance (h) is between 1 and 4/3 the rope diameter (d). Support for this feature is found on paragraph 30 of the present published patent application.

It is submitted that the subject matter of amended claims 1, 2 and 8 is novel and inventive over the prior art documents cited by the Examiner, and in particular over Tesac Corp, Parkin, and/or Gore. With regard to claim 1, Tesac Corp and Parkin do not describe a clamping step wherein the ropes (2, 3) press each other in correspondence with their crossing over area, because of the displacement of the contacting strands, reducing the overall thickness of the first and second rope pressed together to 1 to 4/3 the rope diameter (d) in such a way that, the ropes (2, 3) are forced to lie substantially in the same plane at each knot (4) of the net (1). With regard to claims 2 and 8, Tesac Corp and Parkin are silent about the feature that the distance (h) measured between a tangent line (t9) at an intrados of an arch (9d) of the bridge element (9) and the plane defined by tangent lines (t7, t8) at the intrados of curved bases (7a, 8a) of first U element (7) and second U element (8), in which the given distance (h) is between 1 and 4/3 the rope diameter (d).

Due to the abovementioned features, the ropes are crushed in correspondence with their zone of crossing and thanks to the crushing a consolidation and interpenetration of the ropes is obtained. Thus, the ropes are compact in correspondence with their zone of crossing and a high

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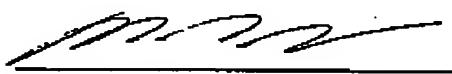
resistance to impulsive stimulus is obtained. It is to be noted that the crushing does not scratch the surfaces of the ropes. As a result, the obtained consolidation does not create any break points on the ropes. To the contrary, Gore discloses a bolt, which passes through the strands of the ropes thus creating break points.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1, 2 and 8 are believed to be in condition for allowance. The dependent claims are also allowable because of their dependence upon an allowable base claim, and because of the further features recited.

IV. Conclusion

Applicants have made every effort to present claims which distinguish over the prior art, and it is thus believed that all claims are in condition for allowance. Nevertheless, Applicants invite the Examiner to call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the application to an allowance. In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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